

BIG CAT RESCUE'S

BIG CAT TIMES

FALL 2019



BIGCATRESCUE.ORG

NIKITA - LIONESS



A MESSAGE FROM BCR PRESIDENT & EDITOR

Jamie Veronica

This has been an unusually hot, humid and rainy Summer. Despite these oppressive obstacles we have been up to some really amazing things around here. All of which are thanks to wonderful supporters just like you.

Our Bobcat Rehabilitation Clinic is more than half way completed and has already hosted a number of orphaned bobcats this year. In addition we now have two more 4,600-square-foot rehab

enclosures that will make it possible for us to help even more native Florida bobcats in need.

Our Founder has been hard at work designing and outfitting a second augmented reality zoo near Miami. The grand opening was a roaring success and the positive feedback from guests regarding the experience as being better than seeing animals in cages is so encouraging!

We are also very excited about a new project we are spearheading which will shine a light on the secretive lives of the world's most elusive small cats. Big Cat Rescue is working closely with Jim Sanderson Ph.D. small cat expert to collect rare footage of the wildcats he has spent a lifetime studying and protecting.

We are counting down the days until we welcome the three rescued circus tigers from Guatemala: Kimba, Simba and Max. We hope that by our next issue of the Big Cat Times we will have lots of photos to share with you of their arrival. In the meantime last minute preparations are being made to their enclosures including the installation of spacious pools.

Don't forget to check out some of the totally paw-some gift ideas in this issue as well as in our online shop at BigCatRescue.biz It's never too early to get a pounce on that holiday shopping!

There is so much more to read in this issue of the Big Cat Times, so go ahead, dig your claws in and devour it!



Big Cat Rescue, one of the world's most effective accredited sanctuaries for exotic cats, is a leading advocate in ending the abuse of captive big cats and saving wild cats from extinction. We are home to over 60 lions, tigers, bobcats, cougars, servals and other species of exotic cats, most of whom have been abandoned, abused, orphaned, saved from the fur trade, or retired from performing acts.

The sanctuary, located on 67 acres in the Citrus Park area of north Tampa, was founded in 1992 and is a 501c3 charity.

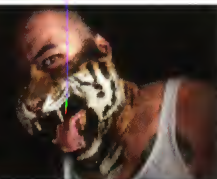
Big Cat Rescue is accredited by the Global Federation of Sanctuaries, certified by Independent Charities of America as a "Best in America Charity," rated 4 Stars by Charity Navigator, and is part of a global coalition including HSUS, AWI, IFAW, WWF, GFAS, Born Free USA and other animal protection groups working together to end big cat abuse.

Read more about Big Cat Rescue and the cats who call it home at BigCatRescue.org

Tour Info:
BigCatRescue.org/Tickets



Those Who Promote Cub Petting Are The
REAL BEASTS **GET THE TRUTH**



MULTI FACETED FIGHT AGAINST CUB PETTING GOES DIGITAL

BY HOWARD BASKIN, BCR TREASURER

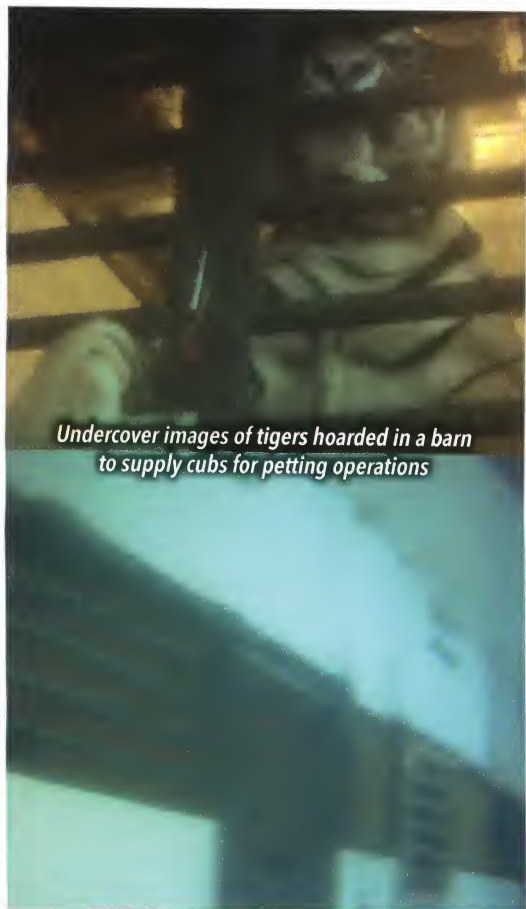
We view cub petting as the number one cause of big cat abuse. Why? - Two reasons. First, it is just abusive by nature. The cubs are torn from their mothers at birth, which is a torment to both mother and cub, physically punished to diminish their natural behaviors, deprived of sleep, and often kept in filthy conditions that lead to ringworm that is easily transmitted to people. There is no tracking of what happens to them once they are too big to pet. Some are raised to become "breeders" to pump out more cubs for petting, others end up in back yards or roadside zoos, others may be destroyed. There is no tracking of how many die in the process.

The second reason we focus on cub petting is that it drives probably 90% of the breeding. Think about it. If a roadside zoo wants to have tigers just to exhibit, how many do they need? - Maybe three or four? Once you have enough tigers for visitors to see, it would not make business sense to have a lot more that are very expensive to feed. But how many does a cub petting operation need? Some petting operations buy their cubs from other breeders. But, the handful of large breeding operations can have 50, 100 or even

more tigers in "breeding pairs." In the wild, female tigers only breed every 2-3 years because they have to spend a few years raising their cubs. At the cub petting breeders the females are "speed bred" to have cubs as rapidly as they can. This is believed to increase the chance of mammary cancer. Two tigers that came to us from breeding operations, Modnic and Trucha, died from this very cancer.

The hazy images at left are from undercover video taken at one of the most notorious cub petting operations. There is reportedly a barn where tigers are kept in what appears to be the equivalent of reinforced horse stalls. This is no life for these wonderful animals.

So what are we doing to put a stop to the horrible practice of cub petting? Part of our effort is to



Undercover images of tigers hoarded in a barn to supply cubs for petting operations

WANT TO PET A TIGER CUB?

LEARN MORE





Those Who Promote
Cub Petting Are The

**REAL
BEASTS**



GET THE TRUTH

seek to change the regulations and laws. In 2012, along with a number of the large animal welfare groups we submitted a petition to USDA to change the regulations to ban cub petting. Separately, our federal bill, the Big Cat Public Safety Act, seeks to change the law to stop the petting. When venues allow cub petting exhibitors to conduct petting at their locations, like at malls, we have been very successful at educating the malls. A big part of that success has been supporters acting in response to our email and Facebook alerts to show the venues that many people oppose this activity. And of course we maintain our site **CubTruth.com** to educate the public about this cruel practice.

The big challenge is that cubs are adorable and people are drawn to them and simply don't know and don't think about the back story behind the petting. When people do ask questions like "why isn't the cub with its mother?" or "where does the cub go when too big to pet?" the breeders lie and say things like "the mother rejected the cub" and "after petting the cub will go to a good life at a sanctuary."

It takes a long time to change the broad view of society on any subject. However, we are seeing awareness of captive exotic animal issues grow rapidly. For more on this, see an article I wrote that was published by Encyclopedia Britannica drawing the comparison between the battle to build awareness of captive big cat issues and the battle for women's suffrage.

BigCatRescue.org/progress

As one example, Ringling closed because more and more people objected to use of the bullhook and changed local laws to prohibit it, and more and more people decided this was not how they wanted their

WANT TO PET A TIGER CUB? **LEARN MORE**



Getting your photo with a tiger cub is like putting a gun to its head. That's because there is no tracking how many cubs are killed when they become too big for cub petting and photo ops. So get the real picture, before another little tiger dies. Visit Cubtruth.com today.



children to learn that animals should be treated. If we can educate enough people about the abuse associated with cub petting so they do not patronize cub petting and do not ooh and ah over photos of people holding cubs, at some point there will simply not be a market for this "product."

Thanks to the generous financial support we receive from supporters, we have recently been able to launch a major digital campaign geared to building awareness of the evils of cub petting. Our wonderful pro bono ad agency PPK helped improve

our CubTruth.com site, created a video on cub petting that receives extraordinary play-through rates, and did the design work on banner ads all at no cost. We also created an animated video on cub petting. You can see these at CubTruth.com.

Of course, to place the banners we have to pay for ad space. And to do enough of that to have an impact is expensive. The campaign is digitally targeted to have the ads appear to people who are looking online for cub petting or seeking to visit areas where cub petting is offered. The campaign began the last few days

a poster PPK created for us to build awareness of cub petting. If you have a place to display any of them, we'll be glad to send you a print ready digital file. Just contact

Howard.Baskin@BigCatRescue.org

What can you do? Share our CubTruth.com site with everyone you know urging them not to patronize cub petting – spreading the word is the way we change how our society views cub petting. We need to change it from adorable to something people avoid because they know the misery it causes, just like many now avoid the circus. Maybe send friends an email something like this:

"I just learned about the sad back story behind the tiger cub petting that seems so innocent and wanted to share it with you in hopes you will not be taken in by those who exploit cubs this way. Please visit CubTruth.com." Thanks very much for helping spread the word!

of June and the results so far are way ahead of usual internet ad norms, so we are very pleased. Samples of the ads are pictured here.

Finally (for now) above is

**WATCH THIS ANIMATED VIDEO
EXPOSING THE TRUTH ABOUT CUB
PETTING AT CUBTRUTH.COM**





It's not too late to get your tickets to our most popular event of the year, the 2019 Wildcat Walkabout!

On November 2, 2019 you can walk about the sanctuary at your own pace, take all the photos and videos you want, and have the benefit of knowing that your admission will go to conserving exotic cats in the wild.

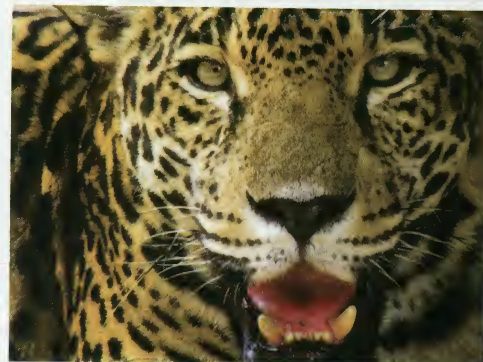
Ticket prices and custom event merchandise profits will go towards funding 5 critical projects to save cheetahs, jaguars, margays, Florida panthers and snow leopards in the wild.

Event Info & Tickets Online at BigCatRescue.org/safari-days/

Check the variety of totally pawsome tees, tanks, hoodies, totes and backpacks online.

Get Your Walkabout Gear bigcatrescue.biz

Search Keyword Walkabout



PASO PACÍFICO



COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC) DONATES OVER \$65,000!

Each autumn generous federal government employees, including the armed forces, have an opportunity to make a pledge to have a portion of each paycheck donated to their chosen charities. These donations come to us from federal employees all over the world. About 80% of the CFC donors do so anonymously, which means we do not get their names to thank them individually. In some cases we get their names but not the amount of the pledge. The cats at Big Cat Rescue have been blessed to have been selected by so many of them that collectively the donations we receive through the CFC total over \$80,000 each year! We would like to take this opportunity to thank the donors of \$100 or more listed below whose names and amounts we do have. At the same time we would like to thank the estimated 1,500 others who have donated anonymously. Your contributions cover a significant portion of our annual budget and truly make a difference in allowing us to give the best possible care to the cats. **THANK YOU ALL!**

Clifford Ackman
Stacey Adams
Theodore Albertine
Kristianna Altemier
Barbara Altera
Mark Altier
Mary Arndt
Rosemary Auld
Peggy Bailey
Beth Baird
Lee Ball
Lisa Barth
Michael Beattie
Brett Berner
Rodney Bexten
Nicolas Blackman
Andrea Blount
Milinda Blue
Mary Blythe
Annika Bolander
Kathryn Boucher
Janice Boutilier-Barnett
Theresa Boyd
Lisa Bradley
Susan Brannigan
Tracey Bridges
Daniel Brown
David Brown
Kurt Brown
Sherri Brown
Stacey Brown
Jacqueline Bryant
Kimberly Burke
Marla Burnell
Roxanne Butler
John Caputo
Wilburn Carlile
Kinion Carroll
Donald Chalfant
Suzanne Chamberlin
Kathryn Cheever
Rebecca Childress
Richard Choboy
Theodore Christian
Patricia Clemans
Cheryl Cole
David Collins
Leslie Connolly
Laura Cooksey
Evelyn Corder-Holmes
Rene Coughenour
Christine Coventry
Maureen Craig
Elijah Cross
Rebecca Dalton
Norberto Davis
Alvaro De Anda
Susan Deth
Valerie Dies
Susan Digiacoia
Susan Dion

Sierra Dole
Nicole Dole Gonzalez
Tara Dunaway
Edward Durell
Louisa Eastman
Debra Edge
Sandra Ehni
Brittany Elliott
Elizabeth Engquist
Ariana Estariel
Rebecca Estok
Deborah Evans
Sharon Evans-Ford
Cynthia Ferre
Megan Flaherty
Barbara Flaxington
Cynthia Florence
Christie Foremsky
Evelyn Fossitt
Barbara Freeby
Meredith Fuentes
Robert Garcia
Kimberly Gates
Valerie Glowinski
Barry Goldsmith
Traci Grazier
Robin Greenwood
Christopher Gribble
Jared Grubbs
William Haines
Heather Haldeman
Vivienne Halpern
Holly Hardy
K Harer
Margaret Harvey

Peter Hennessey
Byron Ho
Marseyerin Hoch
Nicole Hockenberry
Sarah Hoffman
Victoria Hoffman
Allison Hoppe
Amanda Hosbach
Jennifer Howard
Barbara Jamieson
Elona Jarrell
Denise Johnson
Kenneth Johnson
Judy King
Matthew King
Rosemary Klinkner
Valarie Kusiak
Richard LeClear
A Lentine
Melissa Limbaugh
Kelly Lizza
Karma Lombard
Walter Mackenzie
Maureen Madden
Brian Manderfield
Karla Manter
Patty Matson
Joan Mayr
Susan McClure
Thomas McConnell
Thomas McCubbin
Cheryl McDonald
Crystal McGaha
Tyler McGuirk

George McHugh
Jessica McHugh
Marcia Metzger
Shannon Meyers
Eileen Miazga
Angela Micheli
Barb Miller
Cheryl Miller Laatsch
Cheryl Milliner
Valerie Minnich
Gidget Moffett
Cynthia Molkenthin
Laura Monteith
Tanner Moore
Charlene Morales
Jacquelin Morales
Jill Murphy
Moreen Murphy
Steven Naber
Abbie Nestler
John Newman
Denise Nichols
Tina Nilo
Kelly Norwood
Nathan Nutter
Faith Ottavi
Joanne Ottens
Ilsele Passalacqua
Carolyn Paurowski
Darry Perry
Andrea Peters
Joseph Petruzzo
Connie Philbeck
Catherine Phillips
Dana Phillips

Beverly Prater-Harrelson
Edwin Price
Keith Reidt
Jeffrey Rensch
Christine Resch
Erin Rohart
R Rombouts
Alejandrina Rosser
Lisa Ruggiero
Craig Salvas
Jessica Salyers
Susan Schaffer
Jillian Scheibeck
Fred Scheppele
Sheryl Shambaugh
Susan Sharp
Richard Shelton
Danielle Shortt
Melissa Showers
Mary Shyshka
David Slack
Michael Smith
Amber Snyder
Paul Stabile
Odilie Stenard
Keith Stone
November Stonely
Arianda Sugar
Chantelle Sunderman
Jeffrey Swank
Gregory Swensrud
Robyn Sye
Debra Taylor
Renee Taylor
Aaron Terranova
Brian Thomas
Gemel Thomas
Larissa Thurman
Anne Tipton
Debra Tokarz
Melissa Tovera
Michael Travis
Leonard Trotter
Monja Vadnais
Sergio Villela
Breanna Weaver
Paul Wentworth
Jamey Widener-Reynolds
Arthur Wieselthier
C Wild
Julie Wilkinson
Erin Williams
Esther Williams
Katrina Wilson
Rodney Windsor
Katherine Wright
Susan Yahr
James Zechman
Mathew Zenkovich
Toni Zimmerman
Alysa Zirilli

SAVING SMALL CATS WITH EXTENDED REALITY

BY CAROLE BASKIN BCR FOUNDER & CEO

Dr. Jim Sanderson (AKA Gato Jim) is THE world-renowned expert on small cats. However, on his recent visit he confessed that if he had to describe to a Martian what the essence of "cat" is, he would describe the leopard: "silent, solitary, nearly invisible, & utterly deadly" In some ways I think that describes Jim pretty well too. (Except deadly of course - for him I would change that to effective.). At age 69, he's spent nearly half of his life in the jungles, deserts, forests and every place that exotic cats can be found in the wild. He's had to be silent, solitary, and nearly invisible in order to capture some of the only images known to humankind of some of the more elusive cats. His powerful voice for them stems from the grace with which he engages with local communities to protect, rather than persecute, these precious cats and his ability to engage local on the ground partners to manage the work.

Dr. Sanderson had heard about the work we are doing in AR (Augmented Reality) and VR (Virtual Reality) (combined these are

often referred to as XR - Extended Reality). He thought it could be a way to bring people into his world so they could see the cats he sees, and so they could see the majestic places that are home to these creatures. He could imagine people strapping on a headset and being transported to the Tibetan Plateau, where they would see vast wastelands of desert in a way that made them feel they were standing there themselves. At first the place looks devoid of all life, but as the viewer peers into a dark hole in some rocks they are delighted at the sight of a Manul, WITH KITTENS! We commonly refer to them as Pallas cats. They are the fluffy

"Persians" of the exotic cat family. It's hard to picture anything as cute as Pallas cat kittens, but with this



Andean Mountain Cat
Photo by Jim Sanderson, Ph.D.



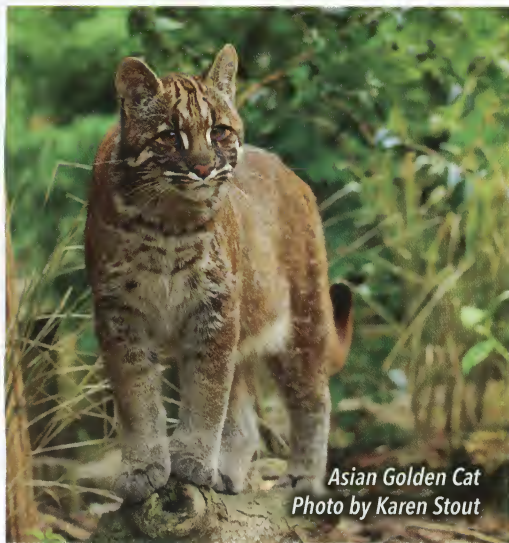
Pallas Cat
Photo by Jar Od



Jaguarundi
Photo by Bodlina Eigenes Werk

technology everyone can experience the delight of seeing them up close and purr-sonal, without holding them hostage.

During his recent full day with us we showed him the 3D and 360 videos we've created in an Oculus Go headset. We went through the process of how the footage is captured with the Insta 360 Evo camera, offloaded via SD cards to the computer, stitched together in Insta 360's free stitcher, and then edited in Premiere Pro to create the



Asian Golden Cat
Photo by Karen Stout

final 360 or 3D video (the camera has two modes, one for each). The result is an experience where the viewer feels like they are in the scene standing close to the cat while the narration they are hearing covers our mission objectives on things such as why wild cats shouldn't be bred for life in cages or why cubs should not be used for pay to play schemes. Jim's mind was in high gear, thinking of all the small cat projects he helps fund around the world.

Small cats get such a tiny portion of all wild cat funding. Millions of dollars are donated annually to projects for the well known "iconic" species like tigers, cheetahs, lions, leopards and jaguars and there are probably two reasons for that. They are just about the only cats you ever see and they are big. There are 41 species of cats, so you've probably never even heard of most of them and if you have, it's most likely been a rare thing to see video of them, in the wild, being who they are. By teaching Jim and his team of conservationists around the world to use this camera, we can change that now!

Dr. Sanderson asked, "What keeps you up at night?" I said, "I fear that

many cat species will completely disappear from the wild before we can convince people that breeding them for life in cages isn't saving them from extinction. We have to use remote cameras, capturing breathtaking footage of these cats, to educate people via augmented reality so they see that we have to preserve the "theaters", which are the forests, jungles and plains where these cats live, before these ecosystems are completely destroyed." We don't have a minute to lose.

There probably isn't another place on earth like Suriname, where the animals live in a perfectly balanced circle of life, untainted by human interference. That place in Suriname may no longer even exist, but if we can bring the wonders of such places to the masses via immersive videos, I believe we can restore these natural theaters. All human existence relies on our collective effort to protect our planet's life support system. I think that's why the first word that Artificial Intelligence learned from the Internet was "cat."

- Carole Baskin

Jim's visit to Big Cat Rescue was on his way to Suriname, on the upper east coast of South America. Back in 2005-2008 he had been commissioned to determine if bauxite mining near the 4-million-acre Central Suriname Nature Reserve was having an impact on local wildlife. During that time he said it was heaven

on earth because no one has ever lived there. As a result, the animals had a total lack of fear of humans. He documented 75 jaguars during his time there, and many pumas, ocelots, margay and jaguarundis. Jim said you just couldn't imagine how it felt to walk right up to a jaguar, or to have a puma follow you out of mere curiosity as you set your camera traps. He didn't fear for his life because the prey species were so abundant.

He didn't find the mining to have a negative effect because it was confined to a very small portion of this huge pristine area and because the one road built to the mine was gated and manned, so poachers couldn't access the area. Now the mine has been abandoned and colleagues in the area report that poachers have free access to this part of paradise via the old mining road. Jim is on his way there now to see if this magical place exists or poachers have had their way with it, and regardless, what we can do to protect it. The first test is whether tortoises are plentiful. They were abundant when he was there years ago. They are the easiest animals to catch to poach. So when poachers violate an area, the tortoises are usually the first species to disappear. Because it is a rainforest, it rains every day and the biggest threats to



Flat Headed Cat
Photo by Jim Sanderson, Ph.D.

Jim and his companion (other than poachers) are the mosquitoes and ants. During his weeks there, he will search by day and will cocoon himself in a hammock that is sheathed in a mosquito net at night. He only has the food he can carry and his cameras.

In the hopes that there are still exquisite cats who will allow his close proximity, he has taken one of our 3D / 360 cameras with him. I only had the one SD card, and one portable battery charger, to give him so he can only get about 45 minutes of footage. I hope the quick tutorial, and limited supplies, will result in something that will move donors to caring about these South American cats enough to make a difference.

If you are a small cat enthusiast, you already know Dr. Jim Sanderson by reputation. He is the founder



BCR Founder & CEO Carole Baskin shows Dr. Sanderson some of our XR Videos

and director of the Small Wild Cat Conservation Foundation, a member of the IUCN Cat Specialist Group, a member of the review board of the Mohammed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund (MBZSCF), and a fellow of Wildlife Conservation Network. Even if you know about his amazing work, which includes several books, there is a new one coming that I can't wait to see. It is six volumes of never-seen-before illustrations of cats from the days before cameras. Jim searched the world to find these.

You may not know our history with him. Jamie Veronica and I met Jim back in the 90s at small cat conferences and have lived vicariously through his many camera trap images of small cats - many of species we figured we'd never see in our lifetimes. As Big Cat Rescue became more financially sound, we have been able to donate to conservation projects. Jim reviews hundreds of projects involving smaller exotic cats to determine those that can really save exotic cats vs those that are merely research with no real impact. He is influential in selecting the small cat projects that receive about \$100,000 each year from the MBZSCF. Currently, Big Cat Rescue donates about \$100,000 to wild cat conservation projects annually and almost half of that goes to projects vetted by Dr. Jim Sanderson. Thanks to our donors, who really understand that small cat lives matter, we are increasing our support to Dr. Jim Sanderson's favorite projects by \$20,000 this year and going forward.

This fall Jim will be holding a conference in Sri Lanka for about 25 of the people who operate his projects on fishing cats, Pallas cats, jungle cats and other rare species around the world. Some of these people also operate as rehab and release facilities for injured cats. In some cases cats cannot be released, so they are kept in as naturalistic enclosures as space and money allow.

While Jim was here we



Iberian Lynx
Photo by Sos Fishki

came up with a plan to obtain 360 and 3D video of these small cats. We are purchasing 20 of the Insta 360 Evo cameras at a 20% discount off the \$450 per kit normal price due to the nature of the project and its publicity value to Insta 360. We plan to send the cameras and one of our staff who is expert in using the camera to the conference. Each of the project leaders will then be able to capture footage of any cats who may be in their care, and as technology improves will be positioned to capture more of the cats in the wild where they belong. (We cannot get the discount on the cameras if we put them on the Wish List, but if you would like to help by funding a camera please send \$360 through our usual donation methods and indicate it is for an EVO 360 3D camera - thanks!)



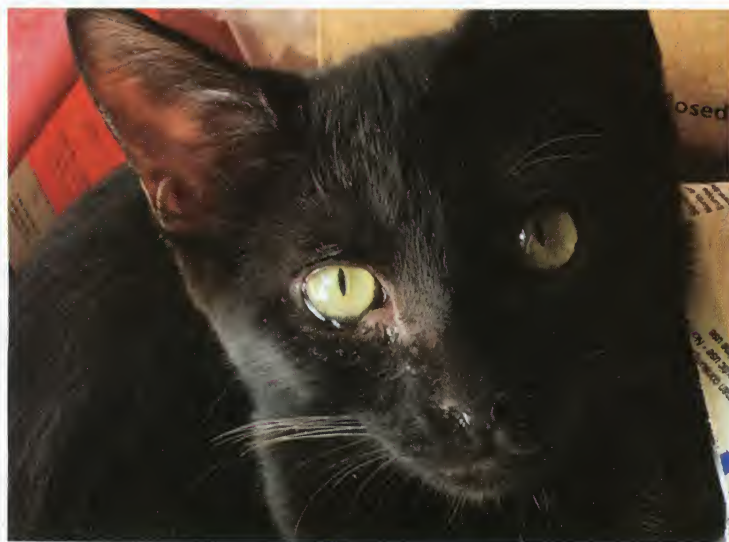
Guigna
Photo by Jim Sanderson Ph.D.

FOSTER KITTEN SPOTLIGHT: T'CHALLA

BY CHRISTINA CRAIG SUBMITTED BY KARMA HURWORTH
BCR FOSTER KITTEN PROGRAM MANAGER

I remember watching the kitten cabana video feed of a little black kitten watching the big cats, and then HOWLING because none of his kitten friends were in the cabana with him yet, and Karma came to his rescue to comfort him. His name was Jasper, and I kind of fell in love hearing that. We already had three cats, but I remembered how we always had a black cat when I was a kid. As an adult, I'd always had Siamese until my daughter begged for a Russian blue. And when you have three cats, what's one more?

So I asked Karma how little Jasper could come live at my house. We had to wait for him to get a little bigger so he could be neutered first, but he finally came home with me one Friday evening. My son is a huge comic fan, so of course we had to re-name our little Black Panther when he came to our house.



T'Challa is a ferocious warrior. Bugs, frogs, and lizards who are unfortunate enough to find themselves in our house are doomed. There is a gecko who lives outside our front door that delights in tormenting T'Challa from the other side of the frosted glass most evenings. T'Challa is convinced that he's going to jump high enough to get that gecko sometime, but no luck so far.

T'Challa is the friendliest and best socialized of all the cats in our house. He's friendly to everyone, but is especially devoted to me. As much as he loves everybody in the family, he is my Baby Cat, who doesn't like it when one of the other cats sits with me. As soon as they leave, he hops in my lap to make sure he gets his time with me.

Check out all of the adorable adoptable foster kittens at
BigCatRescue.org/cams

VOLUNTEER HONORED BY EMPLOYER FOR 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Deidra Ritchie, DD as she is affectionately referred to by her fellow Big Cat Rescuers, has cared for the cats as a keeper volunteer for nearly five years. She is a dedicated individual with a heartwarming smile and is always willing to help out in any way needed. DD is a very special member of our big cat family and we do not know what we would do without her!



Apparently the company she works for felt the same way.

In celebration of her 30 years working with them, the staff decided to honor DD in a way that was close to her heart. They donated \$5,000 to Big Cat Rescue in her honor - what a special gift!

DD had a hard time deciding which cat she wanted to have sponsored in her honor. "It's an agonizing decision because I love all of them!" she told BCR's Director of Donor Appreciation Barbara Nicholas. She finally settled on one and now a beautiful sign hangs in her honor on Nala's enclosure. Thank you DD for being YOU!



CONSERVATION PROJECTS FUNDED IN HONOR OF OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

Congratulations to the following Big Cat Rescuers who have been recognized for their outstanding commitment to the mission of Big Cat Rescue. In honor of this service they were each presented with the SAVE award. The SAVE award is a \$1,000 donation made by Big Cat Rescue towards wild cat conservation in honor of the recipient.



Former Senior Keeper **Alyssa Weber** began her career at Big Cat Rescue as an intern after which she moved to the area and became a volunteer. She dedicated over 5 years towards the care of the cats and during that time was a wonderfully dependable feeder and cleaner and a passionate member of the enrichment team.

In honor of Alyssa, a \$1,000 donation was made to the Ewaso Lions.

In 2010, Ewaso Lions launched Warrior Watch, which protects lions by engaging Samburu Warriors, a group traditionally neglected in conservation decision-making.

Warrior Watch makes the Samburu Warriors ambassadors for the lions while raising awareness about conservation and advocating peaceful coexistence with lions and wildlife. The program builds on the Warriors traditional protection role by increasing their ability to mitigate human-carnivore conflict.



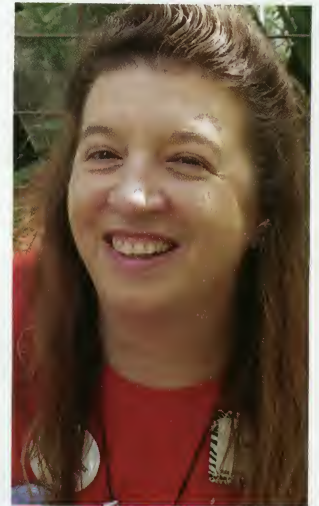
Ewaso Lions works with local community leaders to select Warriors. They train Warriors on wildlife ecology, conservation, human-wildlife conflict transformation, security issues, and more. Over time, the Warriors are trained to collect data and use GPS, allowing Ewaso Lions to map wildlife presence and movements. Following lion attacks on livestock, Warriors encourage herders not to take retaliatory action and help recover lost livestock. Warriors investigate problem animals and consider different solutions for reducing future livestock attacks. Each week, the Warriors meet as a group with Ewaso Lions staff to report on wildlife sightings, incidents of human-wildlife conflict, community awareness meetings, and livestock issues. In turn, Warriors receive educational lessons in English and Kiswahili and arithmetic, as well as a small monthly food stipend and meals during the weekly meetings.

An evaluation of Warrior Watch found that the program had significantly improved attitudes and tolerance towards large carnivores, contributed to the social

and political empowerment of warrior demographic and garnered widespread community support.

ewasolions.org

Big Cat Rescuer **Regina Turgeon** has been a huge help for nearly 8 and a half years both in the gift shop and backing up tours. She is always smiling and is a welcome addition each and every Sunday. Regina is very observant and carefully looks over the cats when she visits, often being the first to report concerns or other issues that need to be addressed. In addition to her dedication to the cats, Regina has a love for all animals.



In honor of Regina a \$1,000 donation was made to the The Cape Leopard Trust/Urban Caracal Project.



The Cape Peninsula is a biodiversity hotspot that has lost almost all of its large mammals such as cape lions, leopards and brown hyenas.

Caracals as a result may play a major role in maintaining the ecosystem as they are the largest remaining predator in the area.

The Urban Caracal Project is used as a vehicle to understand how urbanization impacts wildlife. As wide-ranging mammalian carnivores occurring in low-density populations, caracals may be especially sensitive to the genetic and behavioral effects of urban development.

The Urban Caracal Project aims to conduct a comprehensive ecological study on Cape Peninsula caracals that are isolated by urban Cape Town and may interface with the city. This will be the first study, to their knowledge, of the effects of urbanization on caracals. Using high-tech GPS radio-collars, project members will evaluate movement patterns, habitat preference, corridors, and behavioral changes resulting from urban association.

In addition they aim to study and assess the genetic health of Cape Town caracals. Within the Cape Town area, caracals inhabit patchy open space in the Cape Peninsula and the city itself is likely an absolute barrier to gene flow. They will assess genetic diversity at 'neutral' genetic markers, powerful tools used to measure gene flow between populations (ie., between caracals in the Cape Peninsula isolated by urban Cape Town, and those caracals that are outside of Cape Town), and factors driving genetic change in Cape caracal populations. They will also evaluate genetic variation and health at regions critical to immune function.

urbancaracal.org

Master Keeper **Sue Reed** has dedicated more than 9 years to caring for the cats. She is a very hard working lady and cheerfully

volunteers to help out with some of the less desirable tasks including changing out fly traps around the cats' feeding areas. Sue is pleasant to be around and is a positive role model for other keeper volunteers moving up through the ranks. We are so lucky to have volunteers like Sue!

To show Sue how much we appreciate



her, a \$1,000 donation was made to the David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation to protect tigers.

Wildlife Crime is an ever growing problem which threatens national and international security, economic development and the survival of key species.

Wildlife rangers work in some of the planet's most extreme and dangerous environments and anti-

poaching rangers do one of the toughest jobs in the world. These men and women work tirelessly day and night, in often hostile conditions, to protect wildlife on the conservation front-line. Without on the ground wildlife rangers, there would be no hope of turning the tide in the fight to protect some of the world's most vulnerable and endangered species like elephants, rhinos and tigers. Many wildlife rangers have died in the line of duty, killed by poachers or distressed animals, as they fight to protect vulnerable wildlife.

These dedicated rangers are responsible for a variety of tasks including anti-poaching patrols, locating and removing wildlife snares, collecting vital data on endangered species and habitats, responding to emergency reports of wildlife crime, and gathering important intelligence on criminal activity to help combat wildlife crime.

The David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (DSWF) helps support rangers across Africa and Asia - from the mountains of Mongolia, to the forests of Russia and the wild plains of Africa. DSWF directly funds projects that support rangers in their daily roles, helping to ensure they get the vital field equipment and level of training they need.

davidsshepherd.org

Do you want to help the big cats and make new friends? Big Cat Rescue is always looking for volunteers and interns. Keepers clean enclosures, feed the animals, and landscape. Partners work in the gift shop and guide tours of the sanctuary. Get all the details at:

BigCatRescue.org/volunteer



GIFT SHOP PURCHASES DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE BIG CATS



Hoover Tee, Graphic left chest and full back
S, M, L, & XL **\$25** XXL **\$27**



Rainbow Lion Fitted Tee with Rhinestone Embellishments
S, M, L, & XL **\$25** XXL **\$27**



Not A Pet Tee
S, M, L, & XL **\$25** XXL **\$27**



African Lion Tee
Graphic left chest and full back
S, M, L, & XL **\$25** XXL **\$27**



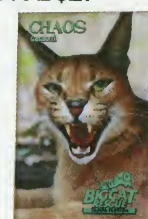
I Am Not A Pet Hoodie
S, M, L, & XL **\$35** XXL **\$37**



Swirling Tiger Women's Fitted Tee
S, M, L, & XL **\$25** XXL **\$27**



Big Cat Silhouette Women's 3/4 Sleeve
S, M, L, & XL **\$20** XXL **\$22**



Laminated Big Cat Photo Magnet
Choose Ares Cougar, Chaos Caracal, or Priya Tigress **\$5**



BCR Logo
Stainless Steel
Water Bottle

Choose Red, Purple, Black or Silver (not shown) 16.oz
\$35



Slow & Easy Lion Tee
S, M, L, & XL **\$25** XXL **\$27**



Rhinestone Fitted, Stretchy
Tiger, Snow Leopard or Leopard
S, M, L, XL **\$25** XXL **\$27**



Carabiner Key Ring
Choose Gold, Black or Blue **\$6 each**



BCR Logo Hand Sanitizer
\$7



BCR Color Changing Tumbler with Straw
Choose Pink, Green, Blue, or Black 16.oz **\$19**



Onyx the black leopard 5" **\$11**



Lexi the leopard 5" **\$11**



BCR Logo Beanie in
Maroon, Black, Gray, Navy
Royal Blue or Green **\$20**



BCR Logo Embroidered
Cap in Navy, Maroon, or Black **\$25**



Kids Shirt - Dream Big Tiger
XS, M, L \$17



Kids Shirt - Board to Be Wild
XS, S, M, & L \$17



Kids Shirt - Big Cats of the World
XS, S, M, & L \$17



Hoover Tiger or Manny Jaguar
Luggage Tag \$11



CHECK OUT OUR ALL OF
OUR BIG CAT ITEMS:
BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ



Infant Shirt - Mane Man
2T, 3T, 4T \$15

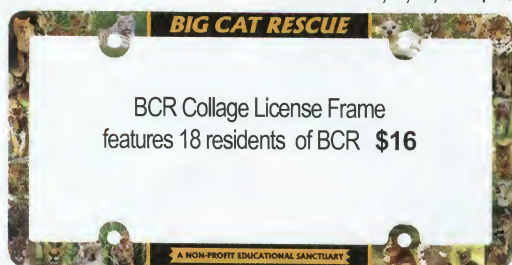


Kids Shirt - Luminous Tiger
XS, S, M, & L \$17

Lion & Lioness
Bumper Sticker
\$5



BELOW ITEMS ONLY AT BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ



BCR Collage License Frame
features 18 residents of BCR \$16



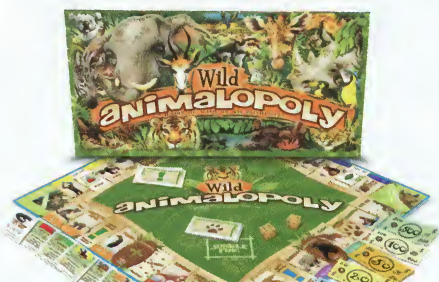
Crazy Cat Lady Toy 5.25"
comes with 6 cats \$16



Stretch Fit 8"
Chakra Healing Stone
Bracelet \$19



Leopard
Clicky Pen
Rotating
message w/
each click \$5



Animal-opoly Themed Monopoly Game \$28



Online
Exclusives

Check
these out
and many
more!







ILLITHIA

AFRICAN SERVAL

Meet our newest rescue, Illithia the serval. Illithia is just 3 years old. She was kept as a pet in Florida and was a popular novelty amongst the community. That was until she grew up to be the predator she is designed to be. The neighbors became fearful of Illithia and her owners made the decision to surrender her. Sadly Illithia will never know the freedom of living in the wild. However she will be well cared for at Big Cat Rescue for the remainder of her life. We hope that sharing her story will help to educate the public as to why exotic cats should not be kept as pets.

Photo by Brittany Mira

WAYS TO HELP

bigcatrescue.org/get-involved/



SPONSOR A CAT

All kits include: 4-page color fact sheet about the species, BCR decal, Registration Card to select the cat of your choice. 8x10 color photo of the cat you choose to sponsor with the cat name and your name as sponsor printed on it. Sponsor levels below include these additional benefits:

\$25 BIG CAT BUDDY – KIDS: Wildcat coloring pages

\$25 BIG CAT SUPPORTER: 10% off card

\$50 BIG CAT FRIEND: 10% off card, 1 Day Tour Pass

\$100 BIG CAT PROTECTOR: 10% off card,
2 Day Tour Passes, 30 mailing labels

\$250 BIG CAT CONSERVATOR: 10% off card,
4 Day Tour Passes, 60 mailing labels

\$500 BIG CAT WARRIOR: Conservator benefits plus
4"x4" photo donor plaque displayed at gift shop and
6"x12" engraved sign displayed on tour path, Private Tour for 10

\$1,000 BIG CAT HERO: Conservator benefits plus 6"x6"
photo donor plaque displayed at gift shop and 9"x12"
engraved sign displayed on tour path, Private Tour for 10

\$2,500 BIG CAT CHAMPION: Conservator benefits plus 8"x8"
photo donor plaque displayed at gift shop and 12"x12"
photo donor sign displayed on tour path, Founder Tour for 10

\$5,000 KING OF BEASTS: Conservator benefits plus 12"x12"
photo donor plaque displayed at gift shop and 18"x24" photo
donor sign displayed on tour path, Founder Tour for 10

BIGCATRESCUE.ORG/GET-INVOLVED/

TOUR & PROGRAMS

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

BIGCATRESCUE.ORG/TICKETS

(813) 920-4130

KIDS TOUR

Children of all ages and their parents can learn about big cats on a guided tour of the sanctuary. Tour is given on a child's educational level and is 1hr. Children must be accompanied by adult.

DAY TOUR

Guided tour of the sanctuary. Learn about the big cats and the threats they face both in the wild as well as in captivity. Hear their personal stories of how they were rescued. Tour is 1.5 hrs. No children under 10 years.

FEEDING TOUR

Follow a keeper as they feed the big cats and learn about their nutritional needs in captivity. Tour is 1 hr. No children under 10 years.

BIG CAT KEEPER TOUR

This tour takes you behind the scenes. Enjoy making enrichment (treats and food puzzles) for the big cats and watch as the keepers hand out the enrichment you made. You will also observe operant training sessions with the big cats. Tour is 2 hrs. No children under 10 years.

**GIFT CERTIFICATES FOR ALL
TOURS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ**

Prices and availability for all tours are subject to change. Visit us online for the most current tour information. Closed Thursdays, Thanksgiving & Christmas Day. Tours may be canceled due to inclement weather.

THE BIG CAT TIMES ORDER FORM

Fall 2019

BIG CAT RESCUE TIGER PIN

BILLING ADDRESS (please print legibly)

ORDER DATE: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

RECIPIENT ADDRESS (if different than above)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____



Wear this pin proudly on your jacket or bag! 3/4" Big Cat Rescue pin. Cartoon tiger and the words Big Cat Rescue. \$4.00

DESCRIPTION	QTY	SIZE	PRICE EACH	TOTAL PRICE
TRANSPORTATION COSTS FOR GUATEMALA TIGERS - TIGER FLIGHT				
SPONSORSHIP KIT:				
AUTOMATIC GIVING PROGRAM - SUSTAINING DONOR SOCIETY	Please charge my card this amount each month:			
PAVE THE WAY BRICK (See description and instructions below)		4X8	\$150	
PAVE THE WAY BRICK (See description and instructions below)		8X8	\$300	
PERIMETER WALL		1 FOOT	\$100	
			GRAND TOTAL	

PERSONALIZATIONS (inscription to appear on the brick or wall fund sign, or brief note to be included on a card sent with order to recipient)

CREDIT CARD INFO:



Card #: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

Exp. Date (MMYY): ____ / ____ CCV# (back of card) ____

Signature: _____

AUTOMATIC GIVING PROGRAM - JOIN THE SUSTAINING DONOR SOCIETY: Big Cat Rescue makes it easy and convenient to donate monthly with no worry. You can do this either by credit card or by direct debit to a checking account for as little as \$5/month. For credit card donations, just fill in the highlighted line on the order form above and provide your credit card information. For checking account direct debit email finance@bigcatrescue.org, or leave a message for Howard at 813-920-4130. This is a G-R-R-eat way to spread out your donations and provide steady support that is so meaningful for the cats.

PAVE THE WAY BRICK: Laser engraved bricks line the paths leading to our Trading Post Gift Shop and to the entrance of the tour path. 4" x 8" Brick: 29 characters per line, total of 5 lines OR heart or paw print symbol, 14 characters, total of 5 lines. 8" x 8" Brick: 14 characters per line, total of 6 lines OR With heart or paw print symbol, 14 characters, total of 4 lines. To order complete form above and include personalization in provided area.

PERIMETER WALL FUND: To best protect our big cats we have constructed a solid perimeter wall surrounding the property. \$100 funds 1 linear foot of wall. Donors will be recognized on a permanent sign at the sanctuary.

Big Cat Rescue is a 501 (c)(3) non profit organization, FEID 59-3330495. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR BIG CAT RESCUE CORP., A FL-BASED NONPROFIT CORPORATION (REGISTRATION NO. CH 11409), MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-435-7352 WITHIN THE STATE OR BY VISITING www.800helpfla.com. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. Big Cat Rescue does not utilize the services of professional solicitors, 100% of all contributions go directly to Big Cat Rescue Corp. The Big Cat Times is distributed quarterly in Tampa, FL at no charge to our donors. If you have any questions, please email info@BigCatRescue.org or call 813-920-4130.

ALPHA THE BOBCAT SET FREE FOLLOWING MONTHS OF CARE

Alpha was found orphaned at just 8 weeks old. She had suffered a broken jaw that required permanent wires to repair. Dr. Boorstein performed the surgery at the Humane Society of



BCR Rehab Team Member Aleesa opens the door releasing Alpha the bobcat



Alpha steps out of the transport crate, but has second thoughts and tries to get back in



Moments later Alpha turns and bolts for the tree line in between BCR Senior Keeper couple Brittany and Mark Mira

Tampa Bay shortly after her rescue. Follow up exams revealed additional concerns with a few of Alpha's teeth. Because Alpha was still growing, the vet team was unsure if these issues would resolve themselves or require intervention. In the months that followed one of Alpha's molars was extracted while her canine tooth that was of concern grew in properly. It was of extreme importance to take care of any dental issues prior to Alpha's release as her teeth would be vital for her survival in the wild.

Alpha was released this Summer at a site encompassing more than 12,000 acres of pristine Florida habitat. Big Cat Rescuers and the Bobcat Rehab Team were thrilled to see her as she bolted from her transport crate back into the wild home where she belonged. It is thanks to our wonderful supporters that this important part of our work is possible. On behalf of 67 bobcats to date: THANK YOU!

TWO ORPHANED BOBCATS MAKE DYNAMIC DUO

Both kittens were very thin and dehydrated upon their arrival. In addition, as is common with native FL bobcats, they suffered an overload of internal parasites.



Ash & Cinder's daily play on the Coolaroo bed

After a brief quarantine period and course of medication the kittens were ready to be introduced. It is always best if possible to pair orphaned bobcats so that they can grow up together and learn life skills through interaction and play. Cinder and Ash became fast friends and have been inseparable ever since.

Cinder and Ash, female and male bobcat kittens, were rescued from separate areas when they were just 6 and 8 weeks old respectively. Both appeared to have been orphaned, although it is unknown if their mothers had been frightened away at the presence of humans. Sadly we will never know.



Ash & Cinder love to nap on their swinging shelf

The duo are growing quickly and have moved through every phase of rehabilitation with effortless ease.

We are excited for their upcoming release and hope the two can be released together at the same site. Be sure to check out our next issue of the Big Cat Times for an update and photos of their release!

NOT EVERY BOBCAT GETS HELP IN TIME

Pebble was just 5 weeks old when she was found all alone in the backyard of a neighborhood. The concerned citizen surrendered her to a nearby rehab facility who in turn called Big Cat Rescue.

The tiny kitten was emaciated and very dehydrated. On her first night she devoured a full meal and played with her stuffed toy. It seemed as



Pebble cuddling her cow stuffie

though she would be ok. Sadly however the following day her health began to decline and she developed worrisome neurological symptoms. Later that same day she passed away.

The Bobcat Rehab Team was crushed. Pebble had made such a huge impression in her very short time with us. Her body was sent to the state lab for necropsy to determine the cause of her passing as the symptoms she had prior to her death were of concern.

Results indicated that Pebble had indeed been starving prior to her rescue. So much so that her organs had begun to shut down. Despite having eaten and drank the damage to her little body had been done and was irreversible.

Endless gratitude to the Bobcat Rehab and Vet Teams for doing everything in their power give Pebble a second chance. Her loss is heartbreaking.

THE INCREDIBLE ADORABLE FLINT

Flint's case was a first for the Bobcat Rehabilitation Program. He was snatched up by hog hunting dogs in the Florida wilderness. Poor Flint must have been terrified!

Upon his arrival Flint was very weak in his front and rear limbs and could barely stand up, much less walk. During his initial exam the Vet Team was surprised to find no bite marks or other obvious wounds. Flint was started on a course of medication and a specialist was consulted.

Flint was taken to see Dr. Levine at the Levine Veterinary Neurology in Bradenton, FL where he was sedated for an MRI. Dr. Levine noted that one of Flint's vertebrae had been fractured. The injury fits with having been grabbed and shaken.

During the next several weeks Flint was confined to a small enclosure to give his back time to heal. It was hoped that rest and medication was all this little guy would need in order to recover. After a period of time Flint was given more access to roam so that his muscles would

stay in good shape. He seemed to be improving and gradually his medications were tapered off. Then suddenly Flint's progress regressed and his mobility issues resurfaced. His meds were started once again and again he began to improve.

In an unexpected turn of events, the Vet Team found that during a follow up exam he suffered from several bone deformities. The long bones in his rear legs were very curved and may have even been broken and then healed improperly. This drastic curvature is impacting his knees and displacing his knee caps. His pelvis and shoulder blade were also deformed.



Flint's expression shows his distrust of humans even at such a young age

It appears as though Flint may suffer from some sort of bone disease or perhaps a nutritional deficiency prior to his rescue that made his bones weak and brittle. We are still awaiting test results and consults from the specialists, but for now we have come to the sad realization that Flint will most likely not be a candidate for release.



Dr. Levine and team sedate Flint for his MRI

GRAND OPENING OF 2ND AR ZOO AT THE WESTFIELD BROWARD SHOPPING CENTER IN PLANTATION, FL

BY CAROLE BASKIN BCR FOUNDER & CEO

Watching the moment a guest's eyes go wide and they say, "Wow!" or when they gasp in delight before breaking into a huge smile from ear to ear never gets old. That's what it's like to be in our AR Zoos showing people the wild cats in augmented and virtual reality. It's the reason I like to log into our online security cameras. Just to see people figure out how to download the free, lightweight VidPic AR app, and then their reaction when they point their phones at the huge exotic cat posters on the wall and see them leap to life. We had witnessed the excitement at the Westfield Citrus Park Shopping Center in March and knew then that this is the first step to retrofitting zoos around the world with a much more engaging, immersive learning experience.

We learned from our first AR Zoo, and modified the Westfield Broward Shopping Center in Plantation, FL accordingly. We improved the image designs, the messaging and the instructions on how to use the space. A number of Big Cat Rescue AdvoCats have stepped up and agreed to man the space at no cost to the sanctuary, but in their absence we want to insure that guests can navigate the process effectively. There is a Ring doorbell installed so visitors can call Holly Kopacz, the AR Zoo Manager in Tampa, with their questions. This space is also especially good because the entire front of it is open to the main central court of the mall. That makes it much more inviting to people passing by. Glancing in, they hear the forest and cat sounds and see 50 of our best videos looping on a big screen TV.

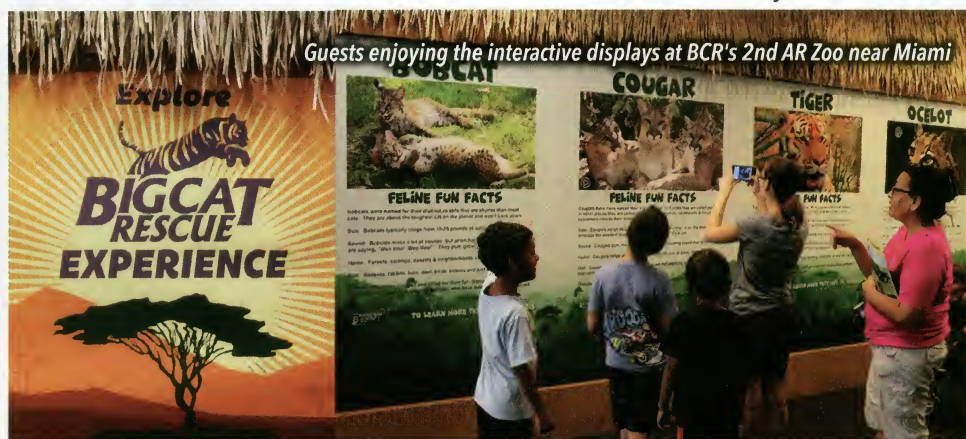
The grand opening on August 10 at the Westfield Broward Shopping Center coincided with the last weekend of Westfield Walls. There was hardly a parking space left, and the mall was literally packed with customers who came to see the art displays of the "Walls" event. There were street dancers, lots of music, interactive art displays and families were in a festive mood. My throat is still sore from having to yell above the DJ and the music but despite that, Holly and her

team of AdvoCats, Corri, Brenda, Eileen, Joann and I were able to guide guests through the process to enjoy the cats in augmented reality.

543 people responded to our Facebook event, saying they were interested in coming and a lot of people who came told me they follow us online, or have visited the sanctuary. I don't know how many hundreds of people came through the space that Saturday, but there were a number of times where all of us were assisting visitors with the app, while Holly's two daughters, Madyson and MaChaia, dressed up as a lion and a tiger, were handing out Animal Cracker cookies in the new packaging that shows wild animals living free, rather than the old design of animals in cages. In all the people I assisted, not one had ever seen this sort of augmented reality technology. I was very happy to see so many people download the app, and then go from poster to poster.

There were so many people having those WOW! moments, that Holly and I were struggling to capture

those moments on film while assisting other guests. There were so many photos and video clips of the way adults and children were positively responding to this immersive technology that we decided to



launch an ARzoo Facebook page. Be sure to like us and share the links below!

Facebook.com/ARzooBCR or visit ARzoo.com

Before they left we made sure everyone got a copy of the Big Cat Times and a flier with all the AR Zoo poster cats so they can show their family and friends. It was interesting to me to hear the public's reaction to the space. It seemed like everyone wanted to know what the catch was; were they supposed to pay? Were they supposed to donate? We let everyone know that all we want them to do is to call their members of Congress and ask them to champion the Big Cat Public Safety Act at BigCatAct.com and to NOT support places that breed wild cats for life in cages. I was even more astonished at the number of people who proclaimed they already boycott zoos and other places that breed and exploit big cats. Maybe we are closer to our goal of a world where all wild cats live free!



SEASON'S GRINNINGS

Your holiday purchases on Amazon Smile could help feed this tiger at no cost to you. Just select BCR as your charity on Amazon Smile and shop [Smile.Amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) instead of [Amazon.com](https://amazon.com). Visit BigCatRescue.org/amazon-smile to learn more and get our cats grinning from ear to ear.



CONGRESSIONAL RECESS IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

BY HOWARD BASKIN, BCR TREASURER

At this writing the Big Cat Public Safety Act, the federal bill that would prevent so much misery by ending owning big cats as pets and stopping the abusive cub petting schemes, has made more progress in the House than in any prior session of Congress. We have 121 cosponsors in the House, a new record, and importantly have had a successful hearing already in the Water, Oceans and Wildlife Subcommittee and are working toward a hearing before the full Committee on Natural Resources.

Despite all the talk about lobbyists and special interests, we have seen that hearing from constituents does matter. The degree of impact of a contact by a constituent tends to be somewhat a function of how much effort it took to make that contact. Emails to legislators help, but if you are emailing in response to an alert from us or another animal welfare organization your email has more impact if you take a few seconds to change the subject line and replace the automated text with a short few sentences of your own. Phone calls to your legislator have more impact because fewer people make that extra effort. So a phone call just counts for more than an email. We have one example where one supporter called their Representative's DC office every week and her persistence paid off. That Legislator signed on as a cosponsor.

What counts most, because it takes much more effort, is to schedule an in person visit with the local staff, or the Washington DC staff if you have the ability to get to DC, or to actually meet the legislator in a town hall setting or a fundraising event while they are in the district or state. The local staffers tend to be community relations oriented, not "policy" staff, but they can communicate

to policy staff in DC that you took the effort to visit.

The current long recess where Legislators are in their districts, or in the case of Senators in their states, lasts until September 8th . So hopefully there are a few weeks left when you receive this. If you are able to make the time and effort, this is an ideal time to attend a town hall or fundraising event (often the "admission" is a relatively small donation) and try to meet the legislator in person

and urge them to support the bill, or to schedule a visit with the local staff by yourself or with any other constituents you can round up to go with you because local staff can communicate your visit directly to the Legislator during recess.

You do not have to be an expert on the bill to have an effective visit. What counts most is that a constituent made the effort to come talk to the staff or Legislator in person. You can download a Fact Sheet to hand to the Legislator or staff at

**BigCatRescue.org/
legislatorfactsheet**

You can see if your Representative is a cosponsor:
<https://tinyurl.com/y3e3xgqr>

If they are, a very helpful "ask" would be to ask them to contact Representative Grijalva, the Chairman of the Natural Resources Committee, and urge him to hold a full committee hearing on the bill. If you would like to chat with someone here about making a visit, just email

Jennifer.Leon@BigCatRescue.org

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO THOUSANDS OF BIG CATS by taking whatever action you can to urge support of the bill, and you can have the most impact by looking for an opportunity to be with the Legislator during recess or meeting with local staff during recess or any time after if you cannot schedule it before the end of recess.

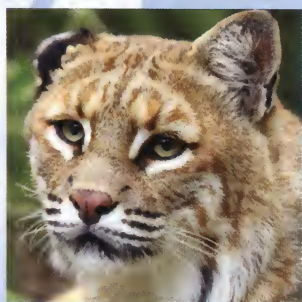
THANKS VERY MUCH for whatever level of effort you are able to make to stop the abuse of these magnificent animals!



Sad Farewell

Taking care of 56 exotic cats is a roller coaster ride of emotions as we try to provide the best possible life for them and yet deal with the gut wrenching decisions of life and death. Of our 56 cats, 33 are over the age of 12, which is as long as they usually live in zoos or the wild. An amazing 23 are over the age of 15 (90+ in human years). More incredible, 12 are 20 years or older. It is with heavy hearts we must say goodbye to this beautiful cat who has touched our hearts forever.

MR HOWELL



2008 - 2019

Upon arrival here in May 2013, Mr. Howell was approximately five years old and was Lovey's mate. The pair were rescued along with Ginger the serval, Mary Ann the bobcat, and Gilligan and Skipper the Canada lynx. Mr Howell was declawed on all four paws and his left ear was folded over most likely the result of a past injury.

In their previous home he and Lovey shared a cramped cage about 5'x13'. Their only shelter was a small plastic dog house that they managed to cram themselves into to escape the cold weather. They also had a tiny child's play table to perch on.

Mr. Howell had a strange coat pattern and coloring and had almost no fur on arrival, so it was believed that he may be some sort of bobcat wildcat hybrid. But once he became healthy and fully furred, he looks like a normal bobcat.

Mr. Howell loved his large rock cave and spent most of his time on top of this mountain observing his surroundings. Mr. Howell also loved spice bag enrichment! Big Cat Rescuers were in awe to see his reaction to the first enrichment he had probably ever received. Mr. Howell rolled around on the ground, rubbing his face on the bag, and pawing at the fun new toy.

Tragically Mr. Howell recently passed away following a veterinary exam. The day following his exam he had several seizures, the final of which took his life. This unexpected loss left us searching for answers. His body was sent to the state lab for a necropsy. The results indicated that Mr. Howell had a very large brain tumor.

GUATEMALA TIGER UPDATE

BY HOWARD BASKIN, BCR TREASURER

Finally, after waiting 11 months, we received the CITES import permit from US Fish & Wildlife Service. CITES is the international treaty under which both an import permit from the receiving country and an export permit from the sending country are required in order to transfer an endangered species from one nation to another. Our friends at Animal Defenders International are currently working on the export permit, which could not be issued until we had the import permit. We are hoping to have that by the end of August (paws crossed) and arrange for transportation to Tampa in September.

Normally such imports have to come through a "designated port," i.e. a port on a list of acceptable ports maintained by USFWS. Tampa is not a designated port. When we brought in Hoover from Peru in 2016 he was flown into Miami, a designated port. This meant that after the long flight to Miami he had to endure a five hour drive to Tampa. It also meant we had to send a crew to Miami the day before to be sure we were there on time for the next day. Then, the flight was delayed until 3am so our people got no sleep.

To avoid this we obtained an exception from USFWS allowing us to fly Max, Simba and Kimba into Tampa. We purchased a new trailer that our van can pull that will allow us to bring them to the sanctuary in one trip. The bad news is we are now finding that a cargo flight to Tampa may cost far, far more than the Hoover flight. This is not just because there are three tigers and it is further. The big issue is that Miami is a much busier cargo airport so in the case of Hoover the carrier could add him to a flight carrying other goods and arrange to carry a load back on the return flight. In Tampa it is much harder to do that. If they end up having to bring the cats alone and return empty, the best quote we have so far is an eye popping \$85,000. If you would like to help with this unexpectedly large expense please just note "Guatemala Tiger Flight" on your check or in the notes field online.



The new Big Cat Rescue Trailer can haul 3 big cat transports and is air-conditioned and has cameras that can be monitored from the truck



SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: CHEETAH

Fun Facts: The fastest land animal in the world, a cheetah can reach over 60 miles per hour in just three seconds – that's faster than a sports car accelerates! Its body has evolved for speed, with long legs, an elongated spine, adapted claws to grip the ground and a long tail for balance. As sprinting at such mega speeds uses a lot of energy, a cheetah chase is usually limited to 650-980 feet, and lasts less than a minute. Cheetahs have between 2,000 - 3,000 spots, which help them to camouflage themselves. Living in an environment where water is scarce, a cheetah can survive on one drink every three to four days.

Size and Appearance: Built for speed, cheetahs are slender, with long thin legs and a long tail. They have coarse, short fur that is yellowish tan in color and covered in solid black spots. Black tear-shaped streaks on the face help to deflect the sun when hunting. Adults weigh between 46 - 158 pounds.

Habitat: The cheetah prefers to live in open grasslands, savannas, dense vegetation, and sometimes even mountainous terrain. The open land of grasslands and semi-desert better accommodates the cheetah's way of hunting, which is running as

opposed to the stalk and pounce method.

Distribution: Previously cheetahs were wide-spread across African and Asian continents, but now they are confined mostly to dry open grasslands of Sub-Saharan Africa, with the majority inhabiting natural reserves or parks.

Reproduction and Offspring: Females usually give birth to 2 - 8 cubs at a time. She nurses her youngsters in a lair hidden by tall vegetation until they are 16 - 24 months old and able to look after themselves.



Social System: Cheetahs are usually found in groups consisting of either a mother and her young, siblings (who stay together for around six months after leaving the mother) or a coalition of males who live and hunt together. Adult females, however, tend to be solitary and only meet with males to mate.

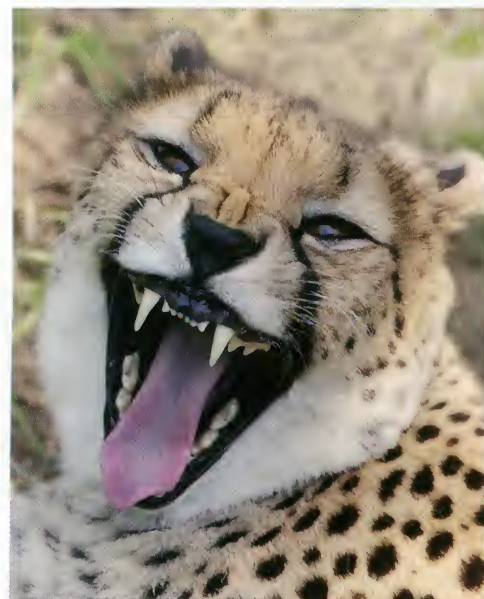
Hunting and Diet: These fierce felines hunt during the day to avoid competition from other powerful predators such as lions, hyenas and

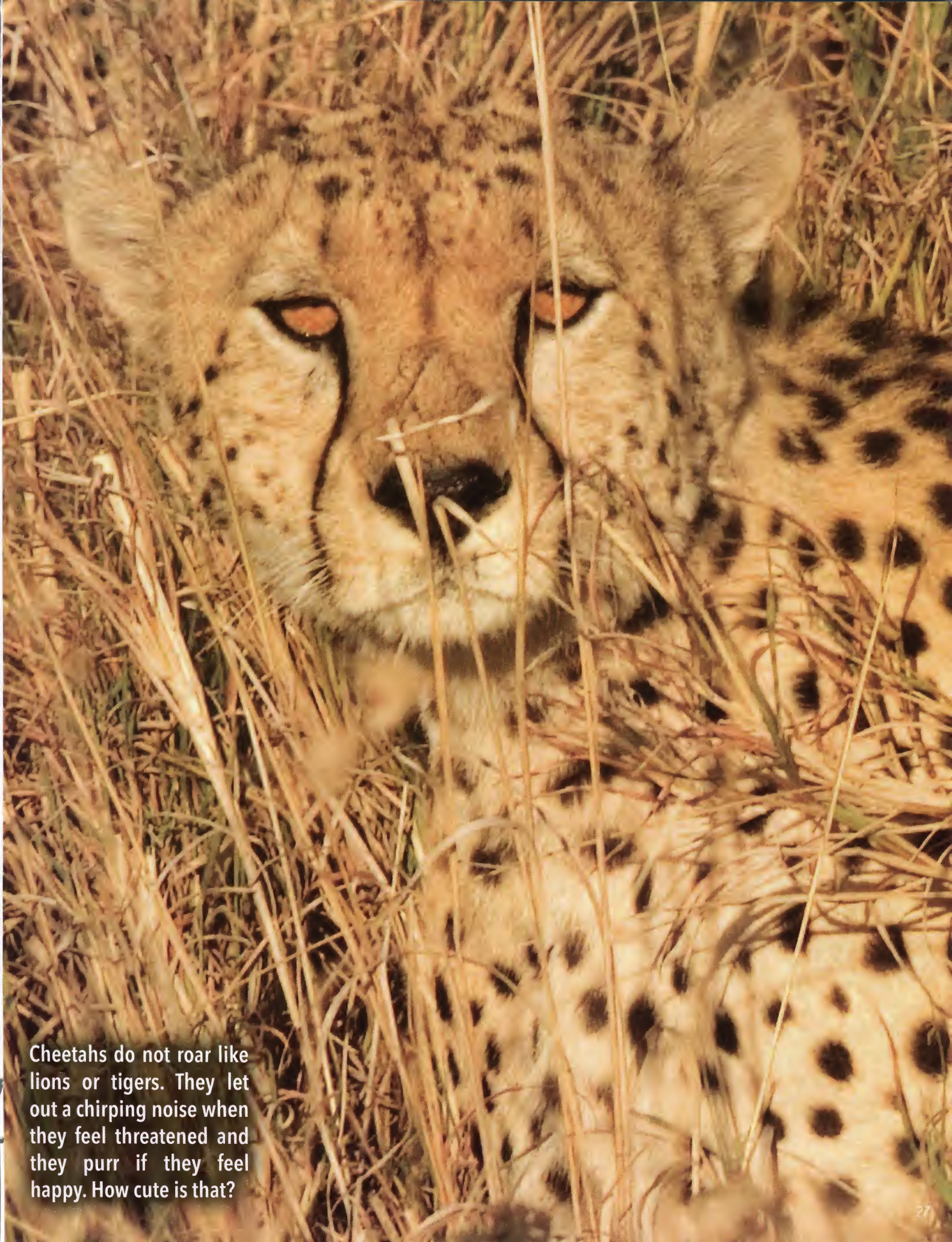
leopards. And boy, can they hunt! First, they use their exceptional eyesight to scan their surroundings before quietly stalking their chosen prey. Then, when the time is right, they sprint from cover, knock down their victim and kill it with a bite to the throat. Their diet is made up primarily of smaller antelopes including springbok, steenbok, Thomson's gazelle, impalas, and duiker. Cheetahs will also feed on wildebeest calves and, occasionally, smaller animals including rabbits, hares and birds.

Threats: Historically cheetahs have been hunted for their fur, but today some of the biggest threats to their survival are loss of habitat and competition for resources. Cheetahs require large areas of land for survival, so increased human settlements and road construction in their habitat puts them at risk.

IUCN Red List: Vulnerable. Sadly, this beautiful animal is threatened by loss of habitat and prey, as well as conflict with humans. As a result, only an estimated 9,000-12,000 remain in Africa.

**BigCatRescue.org/
cheetah-facts/**





Cheetahs do not roar like lions or tigers. They let out a chirping noise when they feel threatened and they purr if they feel happy. How cute is that?

VET REPORTS:

HELP IS HARD TO COME BY ON A HOLIDAY

The wild residents at Big Cat Rescue are always keeping keepers on their toes. You never know what you are going to encounter when you are caring for dozens of big cats in a wild and natural setting.



Ginger serval was having a normal routine day. She ate her breakfast, lounged in the ferns throughout the afternoon, and played in the rain at the end of the day.



Moments after having been seen pouncing in puddles, another keeper walked by handing out evening medications to nearby cats. Ginger came eagerly over to the side of her enclosure in search of a snack, but limped and swayed as she did so. Her leg was dangling. It had been broken!

No one saw how Ginger injured herself, but xrays later indicated that she must have fallen from atop her platform or perhaps had climbed the side of her enclosure after a bird or squirrel and then jumped down landing wrong.

Nonetheless Ginger had a severe injury that required immediate attention. The problem was it was the 4th of July and many clinics were either closed or understaffed. Our vets were out of town with family plans so we tried desperately to get Ginger the help that she needed at a local emergency clinic. To our dismay we were turned away at the door. The on-call veterinarian refused to work with exotic cats.

Thankfully Dr. Boorstein canceled his plans and made the trip to the sanctuary to see Ginger and stabilize her leg. As we do not have the equipment in our onsite Windsong Memorial Hospital to repair fractures, Ginger's leg was immobilized and she was given pain medication to keep her comfortable over night. The following day Ginger received the care she needed at the Humane Society of Tampa Bay where Dr. Boorstein repaired her broken leg using plates and screws.

Ginger has overcome the biggest hurdle so far and will now spend several weeks healing in the Recovery Hospital. She has been a good, yet growly, patient thus far.

MYSTERY MASS REMOVED ON TIGER

Sapphire the white tigress had been noted by her keepers as having difficulty chewing. In response a dental exam was scheduled. At the

same time the Vet Team would take the opportunity to remove a small mass that had developed on her forehead.

Sapphire had two small incisors extracted and the mass surgically removed. Lab results indicated the mass was benign and excision was curative.



Two months later Sapphire wound up in the hospital again. She had refused food for several days and was very lethargic. This occurred at a time this summer when the heat index reached upwards in the 110 - 114 degree range each day.



Sapphire's bloodwork indicated she was in kidney failure. What we were unsure of was whether it was chronic or acute. Chronic kidney failure happens over a longer period of time as a cat ages. The kidneys slowly decrease in function until they fail completely. Acute kidney failure often comes on rapidly and in response to some other factor like not drinking enough or a kidney infection. This type of kidney failure can be treated if caught quickly.

Sapphire was given a large amount of subcutaneous fluids while she was sedated and was started on a course of potent antibiotics the following day. She has since made a full recovery and at the time of writing this issue of the Big Cat Times is currently enjoying her turn in the Vacation Rotation enclosure.

UNUSUAL FIRST WORDS OF CHILDREN INCLUDE CAT, BEER, AND HOOVER

That is according to the Telegraph in the U.K. No wonder Hoover is so beloved by people around the world! We don't know how many lives Hoover has left, because he just cheated death one more time.

Hoover Tiger arrived at Big Cat Rescue on Saturday, April 23rd, 2016 which was his 12th Birthday. For his first 10 years Hoover spent his entire life in a circus wagon or in a circus ring in Peru. In cat years that



made him about 60. He'd suffered beatings, going hungry and having to perform with tigers both older and younger than he. Tigers are solitary

sucking on his dewclaw and a mass was found and removed. The biopsy called it a squamous cell carcinoma which are locally aggressive tumors but slow to metastasize. Months later Keepers reported that Hoover had opened up the long since healed area around the missing declaw, so Dr. Justin Boorstein removed two toes in an effort to get all of the cancer. Because it's such a difficult spot he can't be sure, but he did the best he could because amputating an entire leg on this 15 year old tiger isn't an option. Hoover is currently 90 in cat years and not likely to recover from something that drastic.



By the time this magazine arrives in your mailbox, we hope Hoover will have already completed his two weeks of recovery in a concrete floored cage to keep the wound clean. We all just can't wait for him to be back in his favorite napping spots, giving his keepers a hard

time about meals.

YOUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS HELP PROVIDE THE BEST CARE POSSIBLE TO ALL OF OUR RESIDENTS

In 2014, after years of petitioning, Animal Defenders International was successful in getting the government to ban circus acts that use wild animals. This circus and a couple others went on the run. Hoover's circus reportedly had 12 tigers at the time. A year later in 2015, when ADI and the authorities caught up with them, only Hoover was still alive. It took a year of paperwork and permitting hassles, but by April 2016 Hoover was finally safe here at Big Cat Rescue.

Hoover has had some medical issues that required surgery to correct and each time he's had a hard time healing. In April 2019 he began



Hoover's paw sutured up post surgery

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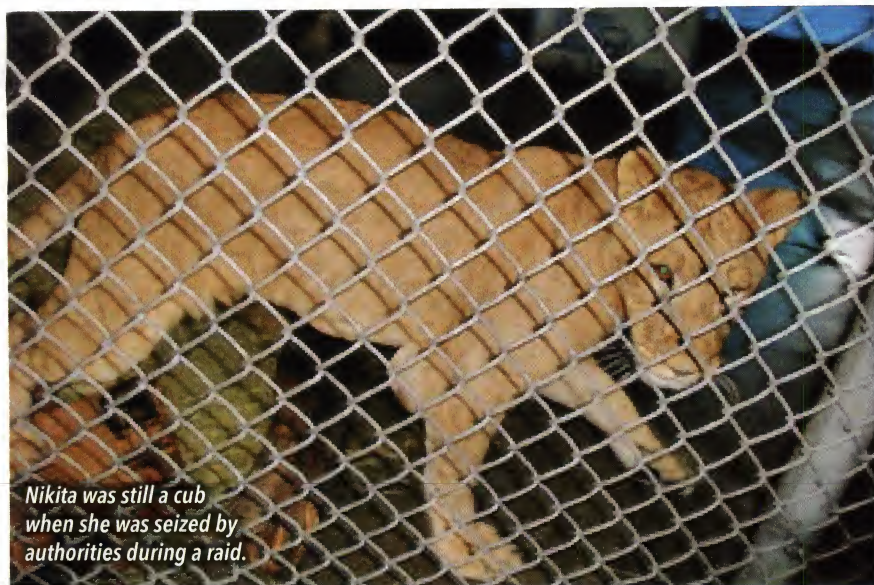
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- Howard Baskin, Treasurer

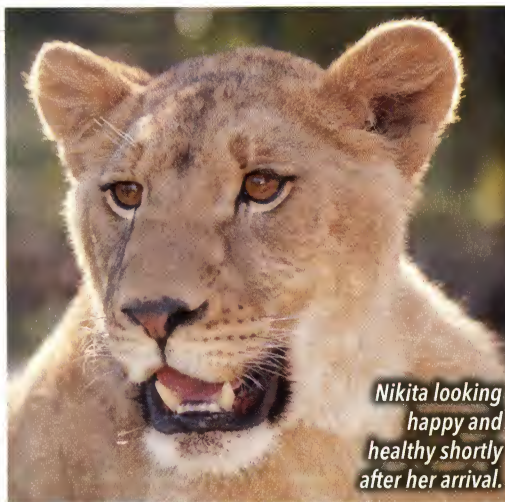
BCT COVER CAT RESCUE STORY: NIKITA LIONESSE

Nikita was found chained to the wall in a crack house during a drug bust in Tennessee. Because she had been confined to a concrete floor, she had huge swellings on her elbows that took months to heal.



Nikita was still a cub when she was seized by authorities during a raid.

The authorities took her to the Nashville Zoo at Grasmere, but she had been declawed and could not live with the zoo's other lions. They had to find a new home for her. IN 2001 Big Cat Rescue agreed to take Nikita as well as three bobcats from the zoo. (The bobcats did not like being on display at the zoo and hid all of the time.)



Nikita looking happy and healthy shortly after her arrival.

Nikita has flourished under our care. She has grown into a tall, healthy lioness. She's extremely playful and loves to roll on her back and grab her paws. Though we wish she had the freedom she deserves, we're so happy that she survived her earlier ordeals to enjoy the blissful days we try to provide for her here.



Nikita loves pumpkin enrichment in the Fall.

See what Nikita lioness is up to 24/7 by logging into her live streaming webcam at BigCatRescue.org/cams

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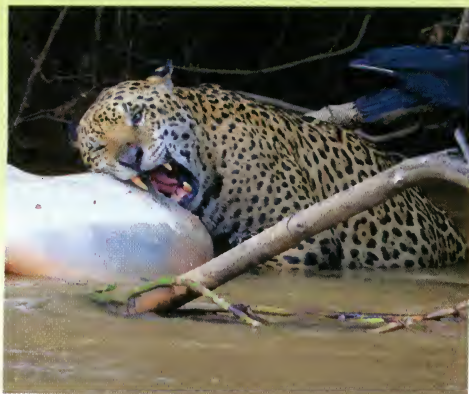


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JAGUARS LOVE THE WATER. THEY ARE THE MOST AQUATIC OF ALL THE BIG CATS, AND PREFER TO BE NEAR RIVERS WHERE THEY HUNT AND REST. JAGUARS CATCH FISH, AND ALSO PREY ON TURTLES, CAIMANS, AND FROGS. EVEN WHEN HUNTING LAND ANIMALS, JAGUARS TYPICALLY TRAVEL UP AND DOWN STREAMS, ALWAYS STAYING NEAR A WATERWAY. JAGUARS ARE SUCH STRONG SWIMMERS THAT THEY OCCASIONALLY SWIM ACROSS THE PANAMA CANAL!



THE BLACK PANTHER IS NOT A SPECIES BUT A MELANISTIC (OPPOSITE TO ALBINISTIC) JAGUAR OR LEOPARD.

TIGERS HAVE WHISKERS IN FIVE PLACES - AROUND THEIR NOSES, ON THEIR CHEEKS, ABOVE THEIR EYES, BEHIND THEIR FRONT LEGS, AND SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THEIR FUR. THESE WHISKERS DETECT SENSORY INFORMATION, HELPING TIGERS TO NAVIGATE IN THE DARK AND ATTACK THEIR PREY MORE ACCURATELY.

